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The Excellency of Publick Charity.

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

U N I V E R S I T Y

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N E W - C O L L E G E - C H A P P E L,

O N T H E

Feast of the *Annuntiation*, 1697.

By H. DOWNES, M. A. and Fellow of the said College.

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PSALM cxii. Verſ. 9, 10.

He hath diſperſed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his Righteouſneſs endureth for ever, his horn ſhall be exalted with honour. The Wicked ſhall ſee it and be grieved, he ſhall gnaw with his teeth and melt away, the deſire of the ungodly ſhall periſh.

TO Conſider the *Excellency* of *Charity* in general, and that *variety* of ſtrong *Motives* which engage to the *Practice* of it; how powerful the *Language* of *Nature* is on its behalf, and how much more ſo the *Word of God*; To conſider, that to reſreſh the *Bowels* of our *Brethren* is to give *Eaſe* and *Comfort* to our *own*, and to ſhew *Compaſſion* to *others* an happy *Means* of taking *Pity* on our *ſelves*; Nay that our *Bounty* to the *Poor* is truly *Lending unto the Lord*, and relieving thoſe *Wants* which he is pleas'd to tender as his *own*; To conſider what good *Diſpoſitions* this *Excellent Grace* argues, and what good *Effects* it every where occasions; how great the

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present Reward of it is, and how much more so its *future* shall be. This would be of too large a compass for a single Discourse of this Nature, I shall therefore confine my self to the Consideration of the *peculiar* Excellency of *publick* Charity, and it may not be improper in this Place, at this *Time*, and on this *Occasion*, to attempt to shew the great Charity of *public* Foundations, particularly of that kind, the Benefit of which most that hear me this day enjoy.

He who hath in these respects dispersed abroad and hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness endureth for ever, his Horn shall be exalted with Honour, though the Wicked shall see it and be grieved.

From whence I shall take occasion to discourse,

First, *Of the great Charity of publick Foundations, especially of those which are Nurseries of Learning and Religion.*

Secondly, *Of the peculiar Honours they reflect upon the Founders of them.*

Thirdly, I shall enquire into the Reasons why, notwithstanding all this, these Places and the Persons who more immediately enjoy the Benefit of them, have been in all Ages, and still are the Objects of

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of many Peoples Hatred, Envy and Ill-will; of these in their Order.

And First, *Of the great Charity of publick Foundations.* As God has put strong Principles in every Man to engage him in the great Work of his own Preservation, so, (because in some Cases he may in no sense be able of himself to help himself) he has both by *Instinct* and *Precept* subjoin'd the Care of others to his own; making Men *mutual Assistants* to one another towards the *Support* and *Well being* of the *whole*.

Now those Persons who to this purpose do most *effectually* labour for the *Publick Good*, not only seeking their *own* but *others* Welfare, and do the *most* to repair the *Ruines* which *Sin* has made, these are the great *Benefactors* to Mankind, the *Supporters* of Kingdoms and the *Pillars* of the World. Of this sort are they who not content to extend their *Beneficence* to some few round about them, move in a larger Sphere, and consult the Good of *Multitudes* not only of the *present* but of *future Generations*; who desire and endeavour that the Effects of their *Charity* may endure as long as the *Wants* of
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Men, and that their *Miseries* may not outlive the *Provision* which these make against them; Who provide *lasting Encouragement* to labour, or a *sure Refuge* to those that cannot work; that contrive the most effectual ways that no Man may be *useless*, but *serviceable*, at least not a *Burthen* to the Commonwealth; *Who are* (as Holy *Job* was) *eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame*, and a present *help* to those whom the Providence of God has thrown upon the Mercy of *others*, and made it both a *Duty* and *Pleasure* to administer to their *Necessities*.

I believe I need not say much to evince the great Charity of Erecting *Hospitals*, and such *public Edifices* for their Relief whom *God's Providence* has disabled from relieving *themselves*; their *Miseries* are apt to make deep *Impressions* upon our Souls, and we easily see and feel the *Excellency* of that *Charity* which removes such *pitiable Objects* out of common view, which *binds up their sores*, *pours oyl into their wounds*, and prevents their *Infirmities* from being *afflictive* to *others*, and as much as may be from being *grievous* to those that *bear* them. Now the *yernings* within our own bowels do

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not speak as much on the behalf of *other* works of *publick Charity*, as *this*; yet 'tis certain that the *Conveniences* and good *Effects* that attend them do. Thus the *Charity* of *employing* the *Poor*, and furnishing them with *work*, which may redound to their *Profit* and the *Benefit* of others, is very advantageous to the *Good* of *Mankind*, and this sort of *Charity* guided with *Discretion* has a large Influence upon the *Happiness* of any *People*; for it much increases the *Strength*, *Wealth* and *Grandeur* of a *Nation*, and upon this it is that the most *Civiliz'd* *Nations* have been the most *flourishing*, and the *Effects* of their *Wisdom* have been seen in the *Prosperity* of the *People*.

How *barbarous* and sadly *miserable* are those *Nations* where the *People* are *ignorant* of the *ways* and *means* to provide against their *own Wants*, and are left open without fence to the *Miseries* of this *World*; who *know not* how to employ their *Strength* to their *Advantage* or *Security*, nor for what *purposes* God made them what they are; certainly in this regard *they may be compar'd unto the beasts that perish*, and are in other respects more *miserable* than *they*.

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Again, How remarkably *weak* and *poor* are those Kingdoms and even nigh unto *Desolation* where *Sloth* and *Idleness* prevail and *Industry* hath no place? Who suffer their Faculties to gather *Rust* for want of *Exercise*, and take no care to apply their *Abilities* to the *Ends* they were given. *Sacred History* mentions *abundance* of *Idleness* as one great *Sin*, and occasion of the *Ruin* of *Sodom*, and *Profane History* informs us that *Idleness*, neglect of *Tillage*, *Mechanic Arts* and *Merchandise*, brought swift *Destruction* upon the great *Persian Monarchy*, and indeed the same *Cause* will have the same *Effects* upon all *States* and *Empires* whatsoever; *Idle Persons* being like *dead Branches*, which serve neither for *Use* nor *Ornament*, but are an heavy *burthen* to that *Body* that bears them.

Whereas in those *Kingdoms*, where every *Man* is *put* and *kept* in a way to be *serviceable* in his *Generation*, and the *Strength* of every *Member* is apply'd as near as may be to the *Sustenance* and *Support* of the whole *Body*, what can arise from hence but *Beauty* and *Strength*, which is not easily to be shaken by *Disorders* from within or by *Violence* from *without*, but is very
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much form'd from the Force of both; A Nation thus improv'd is like a stately Fabrick well laid together, wherein every Material is dispos'd in its proper Place and Order, whence arises the *Comeliness* (I had almost said the *Life*) of the whole; but a rude, unpolish'd, unimprov'd People are like the same Materials, rough-hewn, unprepar'd for Use, out of which indeed fine things might be wrought, were there but *Artificers* to put their hands upon them, and the *Skill* of the *Workman* to form them into *Usefulness* and *Beauty*.

Now by nothing is this so great and good Design more effectually promoted than by setting up *Work-houses*, *Manufactures*, and *Schools* preparatory thereunto; this is the *End* which they aim at, and they cannot generally fail of *Success*; herein many Persons have an *ingenious Education* freely bestow'd upon them, which otherwise by reason of the *Narrowness* of their *Circumstances* they must have wanted for ever, and are train'd up to be truly useful to others, as well as profitable to themselves; by these means a *Spirit of Ingenuity* spreads itself throughout a whole Nation, and the Improve-

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ments Men from thence receive are to the
Advantage of many Generations.

A It is very certain that Man even in this degenerate State is still capable of a great deal of Perfection, but it must be wrought out, and almost any manner of Wisdom must be digg'd for as for hid Treasure; for 'tis observable, that things of greatest Value are not to be found near the Surface. His Faculties are not utterly lost, but only unyieldy and benum'd for want of Use, he does not so properly want Power, as Management, neither is he deficient in his Talents but in his Improvement; and it is this Defect which those publick Works I have been mentioning, do always design to provide against, and do often effect: Which makes such publick Charities well ordered, publick Blessings, and the Authors of them are very deservedly call'd Benefactors; Benefactors not only to those who immediately enjoy the Effects of their Charity, but to as many as the wide Influence of it can reach.

But I am more particularly concern'd to insist upon the great Charity of those publick Foundations which are Nurseries of Learning and Religion. This sort of Charity has that in common

mon with other publick Charities, that it is very extensive in its Design and Usefulness; reaching to Multitudes not only of this but of future Ages, making a sure Provision against those Evils which are likely to last as long as the Sun and Moon endureth; but in other Cases it far exceeds them, they directly aim at the temporal good of Men, this chiefly regards their spiritual and eternal Interest, the Improvement of the Mind into the Likeness of God here, and an happy Enjoyment of him hereafter.

In the other Foundations Men are bred up to a regular Use of the Powers of their Bodies, in these to a due Exercise of the Faculties of their Souls, and that not for their own Benefit alone but for the Use of others, that the unspeakable Advantage of their Improvement may rebound unto all.

Herein those who excel others in the Goods of Fortune are shown the way to do it as much in the Goods of Nature and of Grace, and to adorn their high Stations with such worthy Actions as may make them the Glory of their Times: Herein they are instructed how to manage and improve the Time they are so much

Masters of, and the other *Talents* they enjoy, to their *own Advantage* and the *Publick Good*, that their *Leisure* and *Wealth* may be to them *Opportunities of Honour and Goodness*, which are to many others *Strong Temptations to Sin*, and *sad Occasions of Falling*.

It is very fit that those Persons who either by the *Privilege* of their *Birth*, or the *Choice* of the *People*, are often called to that important Business of *making Laws*; at least have a *mighty Influence* on all that are round about them, should learn betimes for what *purposes* they are by the *Providence* of *God* so highly *advanced*, and be taught to fill up their several *Orbs* with a *suitable Glory*, that they may disperse *Warmth, Light, and Fruitfulness* to the *Earth*. And how much these *Places* conduce to these *Ends*, let those in *Gratitude* declare who have partaken of the *Advantages* of them; sure I am, there never was any that truly answered the *ends* of his coming hither, that had ever reason to repent of so *easy a Purchase* of that *Education* which others graciously enjoy.

For herein also many have the Advantages of a *Liberal Education*, for want of which; those who have been Men of Renown in the *Learned World*, might have been forced to submit to more *servile Employments*, whilst the *Necessities* of this *corruptible Body* had pressed down the *Soul* which miseth upon many things; and the *finiteness* of their *Thoughts* had gone off in the *sweat* of their *Brows*. But to bring those of a *lower Condition* almost to a *Level* with those of a *higher* with respect to the *Improvement* of their *Natures*, and for the *Advancement* of *Learning* and *Religion* in the *World*, herein even these Persons have from the *Charity* of others great *Opportunities*, great *Encouragement*, and great *Obligations* to those *Purposes*.

First, in these *Foundations* they have great *Opportunities* of *Learning* and *Religion*: Indeed, *Time* and *Leisure* are valuable Advantages, for to the purposes I am speaking of, *Time* and *Leisure* are much required. It is well known how *laborious* the search after *Truth* is, and for any one that would make any considerable *Progress* in any *Science*, how necessary it is he should attend upon it without *Distraction*, be free from

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from the necessity of working with his hands, while his head is thus employ'd, and exempt from the Labours of the Body, whilst he would apply himself to those of the Mind. But besides, these men from hence receive the best Direction how to improve their Time and Leisure to the best purposes, without which, Time and Leisure would be of little value. For Man is so little able of himself, to refuse the evil, and choose the good, that without being brought up at the Feet of some Gamaliel, he might be ever learning, and yet never come to the Knowledge of the Truth: but being well informed by those whose Experience qualifies them for the instruction of others, having Pilots to guide them in these dangerous Waters, they make their Voyage with a great deal more Safety and Pleasure, and much sooner and easier arrive at the Haven where they would be; which without such publick Foundations would necessarily be the Privilege but of a few. Moreover, by such publick Nurseries of Learning and Religion, there is a much more free, open, and manly Spirit communicated from one to another, and what by Emulation and other nobler Motives, they

they are brought to aspire to greater Heights than a private Education would ordinarily excite them to. Besides, by means of a publick Education, Men become (as Quintilian observes) more meet for the *Converse* of the *World* with which they must have to do.

And now whilst I behold the *Rivulets* from these *Fountains*, spreading themselves throughout the Land to make glad the *City of God*; whilst I behold *Church* and *State* refreshed with these *Waters* which from hence plentifully flow; I cannot but bless the *Providence* of *God*, who by these means so liberally provideth for the *Earth*, and admire that *Charity* which is so diffusive of its Blessings from one end of the *World* unto the other.

Hence proceed Men who by their *Wisdom* and *Learning*, are meet for the *People*, to turn them from *Darkness* to *Light*, from the *Power* of *Satan* unto the *Lord*, to be *Ambassadors* for *Christ*, and to beseech Men in his stead to be reconciled unto *God*, that they may grow in his *Favour*, by the *Practice* of those *Vertues*, which tho' the *Laws* and *Reason* of Men have generally required, yet *Christianity* alone could sufficiently enforce. Not but that
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even *these Laws* have their singular Use, and will be necessary as long as there are others besides *the Meek that inherit the Earth*, who must have their bounds set which they should not pass. And this is another Advantage of these *publick Foundations*, that require and encourage the Study of the *Laws of Nature*, and *Nations* which ought to be the *Foundation* of all other, directing a more especial Regard to those *Civil and Imperial Laws* which have been generally suppos'd to come *nearest* to the first *Principles*, and have long obtained in the World upon that Account: Many of our *Pious Benefactors* had a particular Eye to the *Advancement* of *this* sort of *Learning*, which enables Men to set an *Inclosure* round each others *Property*, and is the true *Basis* of *Righteousness* and *Peace*.

Hence proceed *others* also, who searching into the *Works* of God for those *Antidotes* which his *Wisdom* has provided in secret against the *Miseries* of the World, do mightily support the *Health* and *Welfare* of the *Body*; by the strength of *other Beings*, they sustain the *Weakness* of *Man*, and in great measure stifle the

the seeds of *Corruption* which mingle themselves with, and often choke the seeds of *Life* which they support, and as long as Man is subject to so many disorders from within, and injuries from without, those that study their *Cure*, and employ their many *Talents* to so good an end, will never be esteemed *unprofitable Servants*, nor those *Places* that encourage them *useless* to the *World*.

I might mention others likewise, who applying their Studies to other purposes, have proved exceeding *useful* in their *Generations*: Witness those *Mathematical Heads*, who by a *Morning Thought* have sav'd the *Labour* of so many *Ages*; and have shewn Men by their *profitable Inventions*, the readiest ways to supply themselves with the *Necessaries* and *Conveniences* of *Life* with abundantly greater ease, thereby abating much of that part of the Curse on Man *In the Sweat of thy Brows shalt thou eat Bread*; whilst these men by examining into the *Laws* of *Motion* and *Mechanism*, do perfect those Arts which are so necessary for the *Well-being* of *Kingdoms*, and the *Employment* of the *People*, they do more good to any *Nation*, than if they

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had sprang a Mine of Gold, or pointed out the Place of Silver where they find it. For as there is great Force in Nature, almost to any purposes; so those that search into this great Depth, and vigorously endeavour to apply it to the Uses of Life, may be, and often are very instrumental to the Good of Mankind, and a more than common Blessing to the Earth.

As for those that apply themselves to the *Speculative Parts* of those Studies, I believe these also meet with a *suitable Reward* to all their Labours in the delightful *Enlargement* of their *Minds*, and more extended *Capacity* of *Thought*; which qualifies them the better to launch out into the deep *Abyss* of *Truth*, and to maintain a *Commerce* with the far distant *Regions* of the *Intellectual World*. Besides these Studies, which are esteemed by many as *Dry* and *Barren*, may be directly exceeding fruitful of good *Thoughts* in the Soul, whilst in the strange *Harmony* of *Numbers*, and the wonderful, but pleasing *Proportion* of *Lines* and *Figures*, it has a clearer View, and more affecting Prospect of his adorable Perfections who made all things in *Number*, *Weight*, and *Measure*.

But

But I am insensibly sliding into a large Field of Matter, when I have not Time to shew the great *Usefulness* of all the particular *Branches* of *Learning*, tho' this would most effectually evince the great *Charity* of these *Foundations* which happily promote them; but this is less necessary in this place, where *Mens Experience* speaks more feelingly upon this Matter than *Words* can.

Then as for *Religion* in such *Charitable Foundations*; How are Men brought up, not only under a *continual Sense*, but *Exercise* of it; and they must be *Proof* against very great *Means* of *Grace* that are not *profited* thereby. The *publick Duties* of a *Christian* so often and solemnly performed, must naturally have a great *Force* upon the *Soul*, and tend to make *Religion* *Habitual* by the *constant Practice* of it: Herein Men have *strict Precepts*, and *frequent Opportunities* of *Practice*, good *Instructions*, and good *Examples* set before them; the one representing the *Reasonableness*, the other the *Practicableness* of true *Goodness*; and it can be no easie matter to rebel against so much *Light*, and to stifle all those good *Motions* which the happy *Cir-*

circumstances of their Life do force upon them.

But Secondly, That Men may effectually Labour to these great Purposes, they here find an agreeable Encouragement attending upon their Labours; the Conveniences of Life which these Foundations afford, are a great Encouragement to make themselves meet to receive them. It is indeed a Reproach to our Natures, that we should stand in need of any additional Encouragement to be Wise and Good; Wisdom and Goodness being themselves a sufficient Reward, and strong Incentives to the Pursuit of them: but yet the general Backwardness of Man to these things, makes it necessary to add the force of other Motives; besides it is very fit for the Credit and Reputation of Learning and Vertue in the World, that as happy Circumstances should attend them, as any other Employment: Therefore it is provided, that they who set themselves to seek after Wisdom, should have their Reward; the Possession of those Advantages, (the hopes of which are a Spur to some) should be a greater Encouragement to others, and strong Motives to Diligence and Industry, which first qualifie them for, and then render them worthy of these Enjoyments.

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But further, the Countenance which is here given to *Learning*, by that *Fellowship* in *Study*, which is the Privilege of these publick Places of *Education*, may be thought no inconsiderable *Encouragement*. *Company* makes any kind of *Labour* go down with *Chearfulness*, and abates much of the *fatigue* of any *Work*; this renders that *Business* a *Pleasure*, which would be esteemed a *Burden* and *Toil* were we alone. *Companions* in this, as in any other *Travel*, insensibly cheat us of the *tediousness* of our *Journey*, and make us less mindful of our *Weariness*, and more unwilling to *complain* of it; for there is some *aversion* in our *Natures* to being out-done by our *Equals*, or *distanced* by those who have only the same *Advantages* in common with our selves.

What need is there in the Third Place, particularly to mention the great *Obligations* which these Places lay upon Men to excel in the *Knowledge* and *Practice* of *Vertue* and *Goodness*: This has been in some measure hinted at already, for their *Opportunities* are *Obligations*; their *Encouragements*, *Obligations*, *Time* and *Leisure*, and the *Priviledges* they enjoy, the *Ends* and *Designs*

signs of their Benefactors, and the *Necessities* of their Country, are all of them *Obligations*, and loudly call for an *Improvement* of their Talents. *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, Cities that had greater *Opportunities*, and *Means* of *Instruction*, according to our Saviour's Argument, have more to answer for, than *Tyre* and *Sidon* that wanted those Advantages which the others enjoyed

It is very natural (at least, it is very reasonable) for any one to consider why he is plac'd in such or such a station, that remembering the end, he may not do amiss, and whilst he does consider what the *Design* is for which those *Privileges* were given, how much the matter of his *Calling* requires *Diligence* and *Application*, and how great the *Necessities* which must be served by it: this Person if he was under no Law, would be a Law unto himself, and endeavour to improve that *Time* which is so pretious, not only upon the account of himself, but of others too.

Upon the Whole therefore, Since *Learning* and *Religion* are so highly advantageous to the World, since the several *Branches* of them do

do aim at the *reparation* of those *Mischiefs* which were occasioned by the *Fall*, with reference either to our *Bodies*, or our *Souls*; and since the *Advancement* of *Knowledge* and *Piety* is much furthered by these *publick Foundations*, which afford great *Opportunities*, great *Encouragements*, and great *Obligations* to these *Purposes*; this shews the abundant *Excellency* of that *publick Charity*, from which such *publick Benefits* do arise: and surely what is pregnant with such great and good *Designs*, and produces such *blessed Effects*, will not ordinarily fail of the *Praise* of *Men*, at least not of the *Approbation* and *Praise* of *God*. Which leads me to the next *general Head* of my *Discourse*, under which, I am to shew.

Secondly, The *peculiar Honour*, which such *publick Works* of *Charity* reflect upon him that doth them, *His righteousness endureth for ever*, *his Horn shall be exalted with Honour*. Every Man is more or less truly *Honorable*, as he is more or less like unto *God*, in whose Image he was made; *true Worth* claims *Esteem*, and any *real Excellency* is a *Patent* for *Honour*. Now there is no *Body* that expresses fairer *Features* of

of the Divinity, than the *Charitable Person* I am speaking of, and consequently, no one can stand fairer for the good *Opinion* of Men, or is more sure to meet with *Honour* from the *Fountain* of it. Whilst men behold such *stately Edifices* as these, how naturally are they lead to consider the *largeness* of his *Mind* from whence they sprang, and whilst they consider the *purposes* for which they serve, admire the *extensive Goodness* of his *Design*, who for those *purposes* ordained them; who like his *Creator* so happily laboured to *rescue* Man out of the *Misery* into which he was fallen, and had so great a *Desire* for, and *Pleasure in the Prosperity* of his *Servants*: Certainly, the best way to measure the *Excellency* of *Charity*, as well as of *Faith*, is by the *Works* of it; most Men will *inwardly* esteem his *Vertues*, of which they see such *glorious Effects*, and out of *Justice* to his *Character*, will endeavour to *set forth* all his *Praise*.

Lo! this is the Man which *trusted not in the multitude of his Riches*, but according to *Solomon's Precept*, *honoured the Lord with his Substance*, and with more than *the First-fruits of his Increase*.

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This is the Man who made to himself *Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness*; who when *Riches increased*, set not his heart upon them, but dispersed them abroad for the *Service of Men*, and the *Glory of God*; this is the Man who was *Proof* against all the *Temptations* which *Riches* bring along with them, was neither tempted by them to *Luxury*, nor *Covetousness*; neither to the *Lusts of the Flesh*, nor to the *Lusts of the Eyes*, nor the *Pride of Life*; but was a faithful *Steward* of these dangerous *Gifts of God*. Such inward *Veneration* must good Men have of so much *Worth*, and by such *Approbations* will they express what they inwardly *admire*. Even in this respect, his *Righteousness* endureth for ever upon the *Hearts* and *Tongues* of these Men, and will be as lasting as the *Effects* of it, even from *Generation to Generation*: To this purpose we read in holy Scripture, that the *Memory of the Just is blessed*; he cannot well be remembered without a kind of *Gayety* of Thought, and *Blessing is upon the Head* of him, through whom so many are truly *Blessed*: Whilst the *Memory of the Wicked shall rot*, that of the *Just shall live for evermore*; and as it is writ-

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ten Two or Three Verses above this of my Text, *the Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance.* But then, if in this respect, the *Witness of Men* is great, the *Witness of Angels* and of *God himself* is much greater: If the *Honour that cometh from Men* is so very valuable, much more that which cometh from *God*, and from *those which are round about him.* How may we imagin, will that *Heavenly Hierarchy* who rejoyce at the *Conversion of Sinners*, pronounce an *Euge* upon him who has so much further'd their *Conversion!* How will they welcome him into the *Regions of Glory*, who has laboured with them in the great *Design* of bringing many unto *Righteousness*, who has been their *Fellow-helper in ministring to the Necessities of the Saints*, and in forwarding their *Progress* toward the *End of their Hopes who are Heirs of Salvation.* How will they embrace such an one in the *Arms of Love*, and be never better pleased, than when they are summoned by their *Maker to set a Crown of pure Gold upon his Head.*

For whereas God hath expressly declared, that *they that honour him, he will honour*; how must the *Administration of this Service*, which is
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abundant by many Thanksgivings unto God, obtain from him a more than ordinary Reempenſe of Reward. Such glorious Works are a great Credit to Religion, and a moſt ſenſible Demonſtration of its Power: Many are hence perſwaded to adore and reverence God, whiſt they obſerve what others do for his Name; whiſt their Light ſo ſhines before Men, and they cannot but ſee their good Works, they are more eaſily led to glorify their Father which is in Heaven; and conſequently we may be aſſured, that ſuch Righteous Men, ſhall not fail of the Righteous Man's Reward. They who are thus Inſtrumental in turning many unto Righteouſneſs, ſhall (according to that in the Prophet) ſhine as the Stars for ever and ever; and thoſe who by their Means are converted unto the Lord, ſhall add new Stars to their Crown, and be a continual Acceſſion to their Glory: So that whereas moſt others can work out their Salvation only while they are here, and then the Night cometh on them when no Man can work: theſe great and glorious Benefactors to Man-kind, leave as it were an increaſing Stock behind them, which is ſtill improving by Poſterity to their Advantage.

In this Sense more especially *their Righteousness endureth for ever*, their *Works of Charity* shall follow them into the other World, to the mighty Increase of their Reward.

But this kind of *Charity* (as most other good Designs) hath a *dark* as well as *bright* side. This *Vertue*, and the *Subjects* and *Effects* of it, which are of so *high a Price* in the sight of good Men, of the glorious Angels, and of God the Judge of all, have yet some that cast *sour Looks* upon them, and can neither afford them a good *Thought*, *Word*, or *Deed*.

But I am in the *Third* and *Last* Place to account for the *Behaviour* of these Men, and to enquire why, notwithstanding what has been said, these *Places* and the *Persons* who more immediately enjoy the *Benefit* of them, have been in all Ages, and still are the Objects of some Peoples *Envy*, *Hatred*, and *Ill-will*. Why the *Wicked*, when they see them are grieved. Some there are of that unhappy *Temper*, that they are never well at ease when others are so, and are truly *miserable*, because those about them are truly *happy*; they catch *Infection* from the *Health* of others, and from the sight of their
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Prosperity grow sick and pine away: and then it is no wonder if such Places as these, where there is such large Provision made for the Happiness of the World, be evil-spoken of, and evil intreated by such Men. This unchristian Temper, must necessarily grudge and fret it self at these things; whilst the eldest Son of Wickedness which ruleth in the Children of Disobedience, observes how much these Foundations contribute to the over-throw of his Kingdom, it cannot be strange, if he set his Agents on work in all places, by all means to weaken their Force, and by raising Prejudices, Calumnies, and Jealousies against them, lessen their Power.

Some there are, who either over-looking their own Faults, more easily espy those of other Men, and discern a Mote in anothers, sooner than a beam in their own Eye: Or being incapable of making just allowances for the Corruption of Human Nature, and Heat of Youth, and the Strength which many Temptations receive from it, do from the miscarriage of some few (most of which, perhaps brought the Infection along with them, or caught it else-where) unreasonably condemn these Places for their Defects,

fects ; as the Unhealthiness of the *Child*, is very often without Cause thrown upon the *Nurse*. But *such Societies* ought not in reason to bear the *blame*, for the *Unfruitfulness* of some of their *Members*, any more than Religion it self, for the *Barrenness* of some of the *Professors* of it. Do Men judge of the *soundness* of a *Tree* from the *decay* of Two or Three of its *Branches* ? ought not rather the *flourishing Condition* of the other *Boughs* to shadow lesser *Defects* ? and also be a *sufficient Proof*, that the *Fault* is not in the *Stock*, but in the *particular Indisposition* of some *Parts* which are unapt to receive *Nourishment* from it. Indeed considering the great *unsteadiness* of *Youth*, and the Claim and Right to *Liberty* they at those Years pretend to, and the *Dangers* which arise from the first Exercise of it ; considering how the *Temptations* they then meet with, are suited to the very *briskness* of their *Blood*, and *gaiety* of their *Complexion* ; it is an *Honour* to these *Foundations*, that so many are herein *preserved* from the *Pollutions* of the *World* ; and that by instilling good *Principles*, and encouraging good *Practices*, they are able in so great a *measure* to *ballance* the

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Weight of *Corruption* and *Sin*. And if there should be those who so *ill* requite the *Charity* and *Care* of others, as not sensibly to be *better'd* thereby, it may be a strong Argument of the wonderful *Degeneracy* of some *Natures*, but none at all of the *Usefulness* of those *Foundations*, which endeavour, tho' ineffectually, to *restrain* them.

Again, *others* there are, who considering how much the Advancement of *Trade* and *Labour*, and such like, is to the *advantage* of any Nation, having their Heads full of *variety* of *Projects* of this Nature, fondly magnifie one Way of *Charity* to the *depression* of another; and whilst their *Thoughts* are warm'd with *these Things*, they forthwith decry all Persons as *useless* to the *Publick*, which are not *serviceable* to it in *their* way.

There is in most Men a great *Partiality* to their own *Fancies*, so great, that they think they cannot do *Justice* to the things *they* admire, without doing *Injustice* to every thing else; and the *Reputation* of *their Designs* must be built upon the *Ruin* of all other. The *Reason* of *this*, I suppose may be that having a *strong Affection*

fection toward the Off-spring of their Brain, as well as any other, and turning those things that please them often over in their Thoughts, they see the Length, and Breadth, and Depth, and Height of their Usefulness, whilst other matters which have but a transitory Glance cast upon them, are not so well esteem'd, because not so well understood, and their Beauty for want of a Closer View does not affect them. Yet one would imagine that amongst a Civilized People, it might be a hard matter to find any, that should only value Men as they do their Beasts, meerly from the Strength of their Limbs.

Indeed it will easily be allowed, that where these Publick Foundations which are Nurseries of Learning and Religion, bear no Proportion or Regard to the Necessities of the People; that is, when they are too many in Number, or are as so many Priviledged Places for men to shelter themselves in from the Service of the World; then indeed, as our Neighbouring Countries can sadly testifie, they may become a Burthen to a Land, and a great Grievance instead of Advantage to the People. For according to S. Paul's

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Argument, *If the whole Body were an Eye, where were the Hearing?* In the *Body Politick*, as well as *Natural*, there are different *Members*; and it is not fit, that every *Member* should have the *same Office*, for then how is it possible that the *different Necessities* of it should be served? But in this *Nation*, the *Number* of these *Religious Houses* can now be no just ground of *Offence*, much less their *Disservice* to the *Publick*, as was shewn above. As therefore the *Eye* cannot say to the *Hand*, *I have no need of thee*, so much less can the *Hand* say to the *Eye*, *I have no need of you*; and consequently, they that extol some *Works of Charity*, to the exclusion of *others*, plead for a *Schism* in the *Body*, which naturally tends to its *Destruction*.

But I fear, the *chief Ground* of *Hatred* lies still behind, I am verily perswaded, that nothing makes these *Places*, or those that sow or reap the *Benefit* of them, so much spoken against by *different Parties*, as the *Opposition* their *Errors* and *Superstitions* from hence meet with on all *Occasions*: (It is the *Wicked*, which when they see them ~~are~~ *grieved*, the *Enemies* of the *Doctrine*, *Discipline*, or *Practice* of *Christiani-*

stianity.) As *Truth* will have its *Opposers*, so those that defend its *Cause*, will have *Adversaries* enough, who will be sure to spare nothing which may *blacken* their Characters, that their *Wisdom* and *Learning*, may have less *Efficacy* upon the Minds of the *People*: Whilst from *such Places* proceed Men who are ever ready to stand in the Gap against those who would either *undermine* our *Faith*, or *break* our *Communion*; this will open the Mouths of the *Gain-sayers*, and make them in the Language of the *Children of Edom* in the *Day of Jerusalem*, cry, *down with them, down with them, even to the Ground*.

If the *Thoughts* of some Men were *Visible*, we should plainly see, that their *Opposition* to *Universities*, generally proceeds from the *Opposition* of *these* to their *Errors*, and they are only out of *Humor* with these *Constitutions*, because they will not favour their *Principles*. I know something of a more *odious Aspect* is often pretended, but this is but a *Pretence*, the other is generally at the *bottom*. 'Tis really their *Enmity* to our *Church*, that makes them *Enemies* to the *Seminaries* of it; and tho' they may
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urge other grounds to the *People*, yet they go upon *these themselves* : But this is so far from being their *Reproach*, that it is their *Honour*. For *this* puts the *Usefulness* of these *Foundations* at present, upon the same Issue with the *Usefulness* of the *Church of England*, and I think a fairer need not be desired.

And thus I shall leave them both *united* in their *common Interests*, to the Protection of *G O D*, against all their *Enemies* round about, that they may both become *the Glory and Praise of the Earth*, whilst the *Wicked* shall see it and be grieved, he shall gnash with his *Teeth*, and melt away ; the *Desire of the Ungodly* shall perish.

F I N I S.